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/ U.S. Labor Department's OSHA proposes more than \$47,000 in fines for process safety management hazards at Boston seafood company



OSHA News Release - Region 1

U.S. Department of Labor

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U.S. Labor Department's OSHA proposes more than \$47,000 in fines for process safety management hazards at Boston seafood company

BRAINTREE, Mass. - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited Stavix Seafoods Inc. for 15 alleged serious violations of safety and health standards at its Channel Street distribution and processing facility in Boston. The seafood company faces a total of \$47,250 in proposed fines, chiefly for deficiencies in its process safety management (PSM) program.

PSM encompasses a detailed set of requirements and procedures employers must follow to proactively assess and address hazards associated with processes and equipment that use large amounts of hazardous chemicals, in this case, anhydrous ammonia in the facility's refrigeration system.

"The requirements of OSHA's PSM standard are stringent and comprehensive because a leak could have a severe or catastrophic effect on employees," said Brenda Gordon, OSHA's area director for Boston and southeastern Massachusetts. "That's why it is imperative for employers to rigorously, completely and continuously scrutinize, update and properly maintain each element of the process to minimize hazards and protect workers' safety and health."

OSHA's inspection found the initial evaluation of hazards associated with the refrigeration system had not been conducted; standard operating procedures had not been developed for all system activities or were incomplete; the system's computer control procedures had not been annually certified as current and accurate; there were no written procedures covering process changes or to maintain the ongoing mechanical integrity of its equipment; process safety information had not been updated to reflect changes; and the PSM program was not audited every three years.

In addition, the employee maintaining the refrigeration system had not received annual emergency response training and respirator fit testing; the facility lacked a written respiratory protection program and complete hazardous energy control procedures for all machines; and the maintenance shop lacked an adequate emergency eye wash.

OSHA issues serious citations when death or serious physical harm is likely to result from hazards about which the employer knew or should have known. Detailed information about OSHA's PSM standard is available online at <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/processsafetymanagement/index.html> (/SLTC/processsafetymanagement/index.html).

The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with the OSHA area director, or contest the citations and proposed penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. The inspection was conducted by OSHA's Boston South Area Office in Braintree, telephone 617-565-6924.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, OSHA's role is to promote safe and healthful working conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, outreach and education. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov> (/index.html).

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